War and Peace in International Relations

Outline:
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3. Concept of Peace
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In International Relations (IR), war and peace are fundamental concepts that explain how states interact in the global system. War refers to organized armed conflict between political entities, usually states, often caused by competition for power, security, or resources. Peace, on the other hand, means not only the absence of war (negative peace) but also the presence of justice, cooperation, and stability (positive peace). According to Realism, war is inevitable in an anarchic world where no central authority exists, and states must rely on power and military strength for survival. Liberalism argues that peace can be achieved through democracy, economic interdependence, and international institutions like the UN. Constructivists emphasize the role of ideas, norms, and shared identities in shaping peaceful relations. Thus, war and peace are deeply connected — while war reflects conflict over interests and power, peace represents efforts toward cooperation, justice, and long-term stability in the international system.